

The University Heights Messenger

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The Gospel and Homosexuality

By Paul Earnhart

The practice of bisexuality and homosexuality is certainly as old as Sodom (Genesis 19) and was widely present in the Greco-Roman world into which the gospel first came. The Greeks practiced it with a vengeance and infected the Romans. Julius Caesar took his pleasures without regard to gender and Mark Antony kept a harem of both sexes. Of the Empire in the New Testament period Will Durant writes that "homosexuality flourished with Oriental abandon" (The Story of Civilization, Vol II, p. 396). Describing that world gone rotten with lust Paul writes specifically of their homosexual degradations (Romans 1:26-27). Yet the open practice of such perversions did not deter the early Christians from their efforts to "turn the world upside down." Indeed many were drawn out of that particular wickedness by the earnest preaching of disciples only recently delivered from the world themselves (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

It would appear that modern society is turning again to the bankrupt paganism of the past. The politicization of the American homosexuals has taken the practice out of the closet. Gay rights organizations lobby doggedly for special protection under the law. Public schools have added homosexuality to the ethnic and gender traits which they press to be accepted as natural and morally valid. Prominent religionists and some mainline churches argue that the Bible does not condemn modern homosexual practice and admit active homosexuals to full participation in church life. This is the reality of the world in which we now live. It was even more the reality of the world into which Jesus and His disciples came. We

should deal with it just as they did.

Homosexuality must be approached realistically. Its practice can no more result in happiness for those beset by such appetites than stealing can bless the thief or killing the murderer. The penalty is built in. Homosexuality will always war against the soul. Efforts to sell the gay lifestyle as normative have produced some popular myths. One is that homosexuals long just as much as heterosexuals for lasting intimacy in a faithful relationship which can be realized by legalizing homosexual "marriage." The evidence does not bear this out.

Thomas E. Schmidt, in his book *Scripture and Homosexuality: Biblical Authority and the Church Today*, draws the well-documented conclusion that "promiscuity among homosexual men...is not merely the majority experience--it is virtually the *only* experience." In a random selection of ten gay men in their thirties Schmidt summarizes that "only one is faithful to his partner, and he will not be within a year. Four have never had a relationship that lasted a year and only one has had a relationship that lasted more than three years. Six regularly have sex with strangers; three participate in orgies...Eight have sexually transmitted diseases, three are HIV positive, one has AIDS."

Marriage and marital fidelity do not come from edicts of state. Marriage existed long before politics by the design of God. The state cannot produce a union where none was divinely intended either biologically or morally.

More important, the Christian must approach homosexuality biblically. However strong the contemporary pressure for a completely open society, the Bible still rejects

homosexual practice as immoral and ungodly (Lev. 18:22-23; 20:13; Deut. 23:18; Rom 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10). Paul specifically condemns its practice by women as well as men. The Old Testament counted it a transgression worthy of death (Lev. 20:13) and the New Testament views it as the practice of those who have “refused to have God in their knowledge” (Rom. 1:28) and who “shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 6:9-10).

Toward such practices as the Old Testament lists among “abominations” (Lev. 18:29) and the New Testament calls “vile passions” we should have the same revulsion as against any other unholy and ungodly behavior. We need to abhor evil (Rom. 12:10) and hate iniquity with the same passion that our Savior did and does (Heb. 1:9). The goal of the kingdom of God is complete abstinence from sinful behavior and those who first came to Christ in a world full of such unholy sensuality left it behind when they took Jesus as Lord (1 Cor. 6:11).

And yet a distinction must be maintained between homosexuality as a practice and the homosexual as a person. How ever repulsive the sin, the sinner is precious to the Lord (Eph. 2:1-5), and if not that sinner not any sinner. Therefore while rightly abhorring ungodliness (Jude 23) we need to remember the Lord’s merciful way with us and even the most grievous transgressors (Luke 7:36-50; John 8:1-12) and seek their salvation as earnestly as any other. There is no indication in Scripture that the fires of hell burn any hotter for the impenitent homosexual fornicator than for those unyieldingly given to heterosexual lusts, selfish pride, or a passion for things. All who leave their perverse ways to walk in the truth of God are “accepted in the Beloved” (Eph. 1:6) and if we are at all wise they will be acceptable with us.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Adam Daniels’ cousin, **Courtney Reeves**, child was born about two months premature. The child, **Aubree**, continues to receive treatment.

Tabetha Lynn (niece of Gina Seabolt’s sister-in-law) continues to need our prayer after her car accident.

Our members: **Jim Edwards, Jeff Howerton, Glenn Davis, Glenn Kimberlin.**

Others: **Vina Krassow, Tom Curtis, Shelly Stewart, Marples family, Glyon Hill, Tom Curtis, John Bennett, Dennis Brennan, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Donald Dawson, Jean Gartland, Wes Kidd, Gail Stein, Shannon Gilbert**

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Streaming Bible study every Tuesday at 7.

The information meeting will be next Sunday at 5.

BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

- Sun:** Gen 36, Ps 19:1-6, Matt 23
- Mon:** Gen 37-38, Ps 19:7-14, Matt 24
- Tue:** Gen 39-40, Ps 20, Matt 25
- Wed:** Gen 41-42, Ps 21, Matt 26
- Thu:** Gen 43-44, Ps 22:1-18, Matt 27-28
- Fri:** Gen 45-46, Ps 22:19-31, Mk 1
- Sat:** Gen 47-48, Ps 23, Mk 2

SERMON TOPICS:

Sunday AM. “Once for all” 1
(Jude 3)

Sunday PM. Paul Fox will be preaching